

Message Text

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PAGE 01 WARSAW 02468 01 OF 02 081239Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----081303Z 122479 /47

R 081107Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY WARSAW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7506
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 WARSAW 2468

EXDIS

EO 11652GDS
TAGS: PARM, PROP, PFOR, US, PL
SUBJ: MOBILIZING SUPPORT FOR U.S. ARMS-REDUCTION PROPOSALS

1. I HOPE THAT, IN PURSUING OUR EFFORT TO CONVINCE THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP OF THE DESIRABILITY OF JOINING WITH US TO INCREASE THE PACE OF ARMS CONTROL AND BEGIN A REAL REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS, WE WILL NOT NEGLECT OUR STRONGEST ALLIES IN THIS PART OF EUROPE. I MEAN THE GREAT MASS OF THE PEOPLE. OF COURSE, I CANNOT SPEAK WITH ASSURANCE ABOUT ANY BUT THE POLISH PEOPLE. PERHAPS MY COLLEAGUES ELSEWHERE WILL PROVIDE JUDGMENTS ABOUT THE POPULATIONS OF THE COUNTRIES WHERE THEY ARE ASSIGNED.

2. HERE, THE INDUSTRIAL WORKERS HAVE A SIGNIFICANT INFLUENCE -- AT LEAST, IN A NEGATIVE SENSE -- ON GOVERNMENT POLICY. THERE IS A KIND OF "DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT" QUITE THE OPPOSITE OF THAT WHICH LENIN CREATED. THE JUNE, 1976, PRICE-RISE FIASCO HAS MADE THE POLISH LEADERSHIP EXTREMELY SENSITIVE TO NEGATIVE
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SIGNALS FROM THE INDUSTRIAL WORKERS. ANYTHING WHICH THE WORKERS BELIEVE THREATENS TO DEFER THE ACHIEVEMENT OF A HIGHER STANDARD OF LIVING EVOKES NEGATIVE SIGNALS.

3. WE SHOULD BE PRESENTING THE ECONOMIC FACTS WHICH ARGUE FOR ARMAMENTS REDUCTION IN SUCH A FASHION THAT THE INDUSTRIAL WORKER CAN UNDERSTAND AND RELATE THEM TO THE

POLICIES OF HIS GOVERNMENT. IF WE CAN DO THIS EFFECTIVELY, WE CAN AT LEAST RAISE SERIOUS QUESTIONS IN THE POPULAR MIND ABOUT THE PURSUIT BY WARSAW PACT GOVERNMENTS OF ECONOMIC POLICIES WHICH EITHER RESULT FROM OR SUPPORT A CONTINUING SOVIET ARMS BUILDUP. (WITH PARTICULAR REGARD TO POLAND, THE SOVIETS HAVE LONG BEEN URGING THE POLISH LEADERSHIP TO MODERNIZE THEIR TANK PARK AND AIRCRAFT INVENTORY. HARD DECISIONS ABOUT WHETHER TO PURCHASE THESE MAJOR ITEMS MUST SOON BE TAKEN.)

4. IN THE PAST, WE HAVE NOT DONE THIS EFFECTIVELY. IT WILL SUFFICE TO CITE TWO PRINCIPAL REASONS.

A) THE MOST ACCURATE WESTERN ESTIMATES OF WARSAW PACT (WP) MILITARY COSTS HAVE BEEN CLASSIFIED. WHILE VERSIONS OF THESE APPEAR IN WESTERN MEDIA, THEY DO NOT REACH EASTERN EUROPEAN MASS AUDIENCES. OF COURSE, EACH WP REGIME KNOWS THE FACTS, BUT THE WORKERS AND FARMERS OF THE WP COUNTRIES, ON WHOSE SHOULDERS THE BURDEN OF SUPPORTING THE WP MILITARY EDIFICE RESTS MOST HEAVILY ARE THE LEAST INFORMED ABOUT ITS COSTS.

B) EVEN WHEN FIGURES ABOUT THOSE COSTS ARE AVAILABLE FOR USE IN PUBLIC DISCUSSION, THEY ARE IN A FORM WHICH IS MEANINGFUL PRIMARILY TO EXPERTS, POLITICIANS, ECONOMISTS, AND THE WELL-INFORMED WESTERN READER, WHOSE PREPARATION TO UNDERSTAND THEM CONSIDERABLY EXCEEDS THAT OF EVEN POLITICALLY ACUTE POLISH WORKERS.

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5. WE SHOULD NOT, HOWEVER, UNDERESTIMATE THE ABILITY OF THE MAN-IN-THE-STREET, IN POLAND, AT LEAST, TO UNDERSTAND VERY WELL THE COSTS OF THE MILITARY EFFORTS HE MUST SUPPORT, IF THOSE COSTS ARE TRANSLATED INTO TERMS OF THE DEFERMENT OF BETTER HOUSING, MORE AND BETTER CONSUMER DURABLES, THE OWNERSHIP OF AN AUTOMOBILE, AND A HIGHER GENERAL STANDARD OF LIVING. HERE, MOST PEOPLE ARE ACUTELY AWARE OF HOW FAR THEY ARE BEHIND WESTERN EUROPEANS AND ARE INSISTENT THAT THE REGIME FOLLOW POLICIES THAT WILL PROGRESSIVELY NARROW THE GAP. IF

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----081341Z 123581 /53

R 081107Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY WARSAW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7507
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 WARSAW 2468

EXDIS

PEOPLE IN POLAND UNDERSTAND BY HOW MUCH
MILITARY AND MILITARY-RELATED EXPENDITURES DECREASE
THE RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO RAISE THEIR STANDARD OF
LIVING, THE REGIME WILL BE UNDER PRESSURE TO SHOW
WHAT IT IS DOING TO REDUCE MILITARY SPENDING AND PRO-
MOTE ARMS REDUCTION.

6. THE DATA SHOULD, HOWEVER, BE PRESENTED IN A NON-
POLEMICAL AND NON-PROVOCATIVE WAY. THE DISCUSSION
SHOULD TAKE PLACE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF A CONSIDER-
ATION OF THE BENEFITS OF ARMS REDUCTION AND, EVENTUALLY,
OF DISARMAMENT TO ALL THE PEOPLES OF THE WORLD, IN-
CLUDING THOSE OF THE WEST. INVIDIOUS COMPARISONS BE-
TWEEN SYSTEMS, LIVING STANDARDS, AND AMOUNTS OF GNP
DEVOTED TO MILITARY ENDS IN WEST AND EAST SHOULD BE
AVOIDED, IF WE ARE TO REALIZE OUR AIM. THE CONTEXT
SHOULD BE THAT OF DISPASSIONATE EXAMINATION OF A PROB-
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LEM THAT CONCERNS US ALL, RATHER THAN LECTURING FROM THE
STANDPOINT OF SUPERIOR WISDOM AND A RICHER ECONOMIC
SYSTEM. MOST PEOPLE HERE FEEL LITTLE ATTACHMENT TO
THE LOCAL LEADERSHIP. BUT TOO STRONG AN ATTACK ON IT
RISKS AROUSING SENTIMENTS OF SOLIDARITY, AT LEAST AMONG
SEGMENTS OF THE INDUSTRIAL WORKING CLASS ("MAYBE THEY
ARE SONS-OF-BITCHES, BUT THEY'RE OUR SONS-OF-BITCHES").

MOREOVER, OUR OBJECTIVE SHOULD BE TO INFLUENCE THE POLISH LEADERSHIP TO TRANSMIT TO THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP A MORE OR LESS OBJECTIVE REPORT ON THE SENTIMENT AMONG ITS MOST IMPORTANT CONSTITUENCY, THE INDUSTRIAL WORKERS. THE POLISH LEADERSHIP IS HARDLY LIKELY TO DO THAT IF IT HAS BEEN PUSHED INTO A DEFENSIVE STATE OF MIND BY AN ACCUSATORY PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN.

7. IF THERE IS MERIT IN THIS PROPOSAL, THE WAY IN WHICH IT SHOULD BE REALIZED IS PROPERLY A SUBJECT TO BE DEALT WITH IN WASHINGTON. IF THERE IS ENOUGH TIME TO PERMIT THE PRODUCTION OF THE REQUISITE ANALYTICAL AND EXPOSITORY MATERIAL BY AN INSTITUTION OUTSIDE THE GOVERNMENT, ITS CREDIBILITY WOULD BE ENHANCED. WHEN THAT MATERIAL IS AVAILABLE, A SERIES OF HIGH-LEVEL OFFICIAL STATEMENTS WOULD BE THE MOST EFFECTIVE MEANS OF PUBLISHING IT.

8. WHILE IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE TO BEGIN SUCH A CAMPAIGN IMMEDIATELY, IN ORDER TO SEE WHETHER AN EFFECT MIGHT NOT BE PRODUCED ON THE CURRENT ATTITUDES OF WP GOVERNMENTS, THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SUBJECT MATTER FOR ALL OF US, THE DESIRABILITY OF TAKING ALL THE REQUISITE SUBTLETIES FULLY INTO ACCOUNT IN DEVISING THE CAMPAIGN, AND THE NEGATIVE EFFECT WHICH WOULD BERY PROBABLY BE PRODUCED BY A CAMPAIGN WHICH WAS HASTILY BEGUN, ALL ARGUE IN FAVOR OF MAKING CAREFUL PREPARATION THE FIRST PRIORITY IN APPROACHING THE REALIZATION OF THIS PROPOSAL. WE NEED TO BE AS SURE AS WE CAN THAT WHAT WE INTEND

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TO SAY WILL INDEED PRODUCE THE DESIRED EFFECT.
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Message Attributes

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Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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